

Minutes of the Solid Waste Committee

February 9, 2006

Present: Susan Waite, Recycling Coordinator; Pat Church, chair; Clare Bertrand, Marianne Lorenzelli, Meg Vickery

The Minutes from Dec. 2005 were approved with minor corrections. The Minutes for January 12 and January 24th were also approved with minor corrections; motion was put forward by Clare, accepted by all.

- 1) Letter to town Leadership: Pat read her draft of a letter to the Select Board voicing concern that the position of Recycling Coordinator has not been valued enough. It was suggested that we include in the letter the fact that all other neighboring communities of a similar size have a Recycling Coordinator, that we stress what has been accomplished over the years by our various RC.s and that we point out that the Solid Waste Committee would not be able to do a great deal without a Recycling Coordinator. Marianne suggested we ask that the position be full time. Pat wants to stress its importance. Pat will do some more editing and bring another draft to the next meeting.

UPDATES

1. Susan reported that there is one bin in storage for downtown recycling. The committee discussed where it should be placed and wondered why there was only one. Susan will investigate placement and will call Jonathan Tucker about it. There were supposed to be several.
2. Susan reported on the Municipal Recycling Coordinator Meeting she attended which was focused on Climate Change, contracts and net working. She learned that Northampton is creating a Brown Bag Kit for drying latex paint; an idea we could have in Amherst. The MRF revenue checks will be out soon for the first half of '06 for 744 tons giving us an income of \$21,310. She reported that there will be a Free Pesticide collection day in Franklin County and Northampton that is open to Amherst farmers as well. We can also have pesticide pick-up on hazardous waste days. She also learned about a mercury removal program where an organization will come to schools and replace any products containing mercury with mercury free products. She will look into whether this has been done yet in Amherst.
3. Susan's Goals: She is getting organized and has found many helpful things like a video on composting in the schools and is getting a good understanding of the history of recycling in Amherst. She needs to get working with UMASS in order to use the grant we were awarded. There is great need to improve the composting in the schools or Martin's Farms might back out. She is doing research and making contacts, and finding outstanding items in the old minutes that she can

follow up on, such as charging haulers who do not recycle or charging schools if the compost is too contaminated.

4. Composting: Martin's Farm has been unhappy with the compost brought from Amherst. We need better signs and to be sure the custodians don't tie the bags. There should be no more than 5% contamination in each load. It was agreed that we need more administrative support, and help from custodians, and parents. It was suggested that we send flyers home with children in Crocker farm and Wildwood. Need better signs, perhaps made thru the Art Departments.
5. Business Surveys will be looked at in the next meeting.
6. Earth Day: Susan has several ideas for Earth Day to go along with what we have done in the past, such as selling yard refuse bags, the **Recyclopedia**, perhaps have a sculpture project, an Environmental Hero award, offer cornstarch utensils, more information about the composting program, a graph about the town's recycling and alternatives to toxic waste.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25.

The next meeting is March 9, at 4:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Vickery, clerk pro tem